

To,
Instructional Quality Commission
California Department of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 3207
Sacramento, CA 95814

11/22/15

RE: Hindu Summary of the issue with framework as of Nov meeting.

It has become a morbid pass-time of **non-Hindu** and **anti-Hindu academics hostile to Hinduism** who made a career from presenting colonial view of history to bring in **complex academic wrangling to continue to objectify Hindus, while rest of the world gets humanized**. Their latest is claim that Hinduism is not even Hinduism! Also that Indian civilization should not even be recognized as Indian civilization. What else does the commission need to see to understand the absurd lengths these arguments are going to **objectify Hinduism** and **deny** Indian civilization its place in History? We are talking about how Hinduism and ancient India is introduced to 6th graders. **6th graders!!** Using 6th graders to fight out political agendas, and still unresolved academic arguments that belong in graduate school is plain wrong. Why make adjustments requested by academics hostile to Hinduism, who clearly have a political agenda to deny India a fair place in History books? Rather **be fair and consistent in having the framework be in-line with standards on social content for all religions and cultures equally**.

On the **academic scrutiny**, we have provided adequate material from very credible, respected and balanced academics to make our points. We would like to have some explanation to understand why the stand of non-Hindu and anti-Hindu academics hostile to Hinduism is somehow seen as an “academic consensus”, while the academic analysis of balanced academics, supporting the demands of Hindu kids, does not get the needed acceptance.

Is there an absence of academic voices that claim that Islam is oppressive and unjust to women? Yet there is no mention of this in the framework. Is there absence of voices that claim Slavery and Colonization was spawned from Abrahamic notion of the chosen people and ‘right to dominion’? Yet framework does not have introduction to Christianity or Judaism be defined by a spotlight on these issues. Women in US only recently got right to vote, and in the west, the laws accorded them status as property of their husbands, somewhat similar to a horse, where stealing a horse and stealing another man’s woman had similar consequences, perhaps harsher for stealing horse. The ‘superior’ Europeans would not touch the “savage uncivilized” (Asian) man except through gloved hands. ‘Dogs and Indians’ were not allowed near civilized Europeans. Why were Chinatowns created if not to specifically prevent the Asians from mixing in ‘civilized’ circles. These have been in recent history compared to Ancient India. Yet these are presented in a very different light and tone, and ‘untouchability’ is made unique to India. We are denied our religion, language and even homeland. Please note that we are not demanding you demean other religions equally. We are just trying to

appeal that fairness and consistency be brought in application of standards of social content for Hinduism and Indian civilization as well.

It is very interesting that of the religions and cultures from early history **still living today**, only in case of Hinduism does the framework want to show that the society was patriarchal, and had some segments of society disadvantaged. Not for Judaism, Christianity, Islam or even other Asian cultures. How does one reconcile this insistence with the fact that India had many groups which had and still have a matriarchal social structure, while there is absolutely no evidence of such a thing in Abrahamic cultures? Hindu religion is not dogmatic. Indian civilization has been unique in its approach and acceptance of diversity, **these are strengths and positive attributes**. The social structure served to **ensure no one group would control the four pillar powers** of society: Knowledge, Government authority, Wealth and Labor, constantly reforming to ensure these were distributed among different groups. Presenting these as an oppressive attributes of civilization is Euro centric colonial goggles.

India and Hinduism have been vilified and demonized in California schools. This is simply a fact. It is necessary to adopt our edits in its entirety, especially as relates to portion of Hindu theology and social structure.

At stake is accepting that Hindu kids are also kids and they have the same right to feeling pride in their heritage and be secure in their religion, as rest of the **civilized** kids.

We are hoping that the new draft shall show some effort to decenter from Europe in the tone and attitude for presentation of Hinduism. Shall Hinduism and Indian civilization continue to be objectified, or will we be treated at par with other living **human** civilizations?

Sincerely,

Tushar Pandya
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